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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 FEA-01
ACDA-07 IO-13 EB-07 NRC-05 OES-06 ERDA-05 AF-08 /110 W
---------- 078618 /12
R 211015Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9602
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT TECH NL
SUBJECT: NUCLEAR ENRICHMENT: DUTCH CABINET SAYS MAYBE

REF: THE HAGUE 6688

1. FACED WITH THE THREAT OF A POSSIBLE WALK OUT BY RADICAL PARTY MINISTERS ON QUESTION OF EXPANSION OF ALMELO ULTRA-CENTRIFUGE ENRICHMENT PLANT, DUTCH CABINET DEC 17 TOOK PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE AND AGREED TO TEMPORIZE. "DECISION" ANNOUNCED BY PRIMIN DEN UYL FOLLOWING MEETING WAS THAT GOVERNMENT HAD CONDITIONALLY AGREED ON EXPANSION TO 2,000 TON SWU (SEPARATIVE WORK UNITS) PER YEAR CAPACITY. CONDITIONS ARE THAT DUTCH ECONOMIC MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER WILL DISCUSS A NUMBER OF FINANCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ORGANIZATIONAL POINTS WITH THEIR FRG AND UK COUNTERPARTS AND THAT FONMIN WILL ALSO HOLD DISCUSSIONS ON GUARANTIES REGARDING SALES OF ENRICHED URANIUM BY URENCO. CALLING IT "A PROVISIONAL DECISION ON EMPHATIC CONDITIONS," DEN
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UYL WOULD NOT ELABORATE ON WHAT GON WANTED TO ACHIEVE VIA ADDITIONAL TALKS WITH UK AND FRG PARTNERS.

2. OBSERVERS SEE ACTION AS A NON-DECISION IN THE MOLD OF PAST DEN UYL CABINET MOVES TO DELAY ON DIFFICULT PROBLEMS. ALTHOUGH PRIMIN TOLD PRESS THAT FINAL DECISION

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ON ALMELO WOULD PRBABLY BE TAKEN WITHIN WEEKS RATHER
THAN MONTHS, HE INDICATED THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD ALSO BE
HOLDING DISCUSSIONS WITH PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES. UNLESS
THOSE CONSULTATIONS TAKE PLACE THIS WEEK THEY ARE LIKELY
TO BE PUT ASIDE UNTIL LATE JANUARY BECAUSE OF PARLIAMENTARY
RECESS.

3. POSTPONEMENT OF DECISION REPRESENTS A VICTORY OF
SORTS FOR SMALL RADICAL PARTY (PPR) WHICH IS ADAMANTLY
OPPOSED TO ANY INCREASE IN NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES. PARTY
KEPT PRESSURE ON GOVERNMENT DEC 28 WHEN PPR BOARD VOTED
66-12 TO HAVE ITS REPRESENTATIVE IN GOVERNMENT RESIGN IF
DEFINITIVE DECISION IS MADE TO EXPAND ALMELO FACILITIES.
A VOTE ON WITHDRAWAL FROM DEN UYL CABINET NOW WAS DEFEATED
31-41

4. POSTPONEMENT OF HARD DECISIONS HAS BECOME FAVORITE
TOOL OF DEN UYL CABINET IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT. COURSE
NOW EMBARKED UPON IS MUCH LIKE THAT CABINET EMPLOYED IN
CONSIDERING SUPPLY OF NUCLEAR REACTORS TO SOUTH AFRICA.

EVENTUALLY DECISION WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM GON WHEN SOUTH
AFRICAN CONTRACT WAS PLACED ELSEWHERE. CABINET MAY NOW
BE PLAYING SAME GAME IN HOPES THAT FRG DECISION TO
GO IT ALONE IN CREATING ADDITIONAL ENRICHMENT PRODUCTION
FACILITIES WILL MAKE QUESTION OF ALMELO EXPANSION MOOT.
(BONN 21069).
MCCLOSKEY

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